

Poetry Sites You Should Visit

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We've found some really good sites on the web that have encouraged us to interact with poetry, sometimes reading quietly and enjoying the ways the words work, sometimes sharing a wonderful poem with a group of youngsters. All poetry causes its readers to think about their everyday lives in very different ways. Sometimes it even gives us incentives for reading aloud to each other or picking up a pen and creating a few poems of our own. We'll keep those "poetic treasures" to ourselves, but we won't keep the Web sites from you. Here are a few that may provide you with a creative burst of your own.

American Life in Poetry, <http://www.americanlifeinpoetry.org>, has been formed as a partnership between the Library of Congress and the Poetry Foundation. Based on the ideas of 2004-2006 Poet Laureate Consultant for the Library of Congress Ted Kooser, the site holds a different interpretation of poetry and its place in our world each week accompanied with a poem by an American poet. The site is intended for newspapers that will reprint the poems and columns in support of poetry appreciation, but the common reader can also enjoy these brief poems and their introductions.

Poetry 180: a poem a day for american high schools, <http://loc.gov/poetry/180/>, is chock full of poems that beg to be read out loud. Billy Collins, former Poet Laureate of the U.S., instigated this blog so that students in our high schools could be exposed to a poem each school day. Although a perfect time for any teacher to begin using the site is on the first day of classes, we can begin to enjoy the poems any time, perhaps even marking this as a favorite spot on the Web so we can easily return for 180 days!

The Poetry Foundation, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/foundation/about.html>, has a wonderful site that contains poems, articles, and blog posts for those of us who get inspired to find out more about poetry's place in culture. There is a children's poetry place on the site that will lead you to wonderful videos of poets like the Children's Poet Laureates Mary Ann Hoberman and Jack Prelutsky. While there is much to share with youngsters on this site, there are also helpful hints for the adult who wants to read some poetry to some children.

Poets.org, <http://www.poets.org>, holds informative discussions of poetry that teens will enjoy, and it also includes weekly spotlights of poems, essays, poets, and audio presentations that adults might enjoy. Students who are planning a paper on poetic form will also find the information about the various schools and movements worthwhile. Anyone wanting to find cultural depictions of poetry in media should click on "Poetry in Film, Radio, and TV." Also available is information about National Poetry Month, which is held in April each year.

Writing with Writers; Poetry Writing, <http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/poetry>, contains excellent teacher materials and ideas for sharing poetry with youngsters .

Since Scholastic publishes children's books and releases media for children, the site contains interviews, book lists, and curriculum suggestions for teachers in grades K-8. The "Poetry Idea Engine" explains simple poems with stylistic formulas that children can try within clever animated graphics. The "Teacher's Guide" will help teachers plan and evaluate a poetry unit, including a two-week outline for objectives and lessons consistent with the national guidelines for poetry instruction set by the National Council of Teachers of English.